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Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes

Graduate Council

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10-10-2013

# Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes - October 10, 2013

Graduate Council

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## Recommended Citation

Graduate Council, "Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes - October 10, 2013" (2013). *Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes*.  
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**Graduate Deans' Group**  
**Thursday, October 10, 2013, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center**

Attending:

Millie Cheatham for Dixie Thompson, Catherine Cox, Joy DeSensi (Chair), George Dodds, Mary Gunther, Donald Hodges, Carolyn Hodges, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Tom Ladd, Catherine Luther, Mike McEntee, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Masood Parang, Carol Parker, Annette Ranft, Cynthia Rocha, and John Stier

The Graduate Deans' Group meeting was called to order by Joy DeSensi, on Thursday, October 10, 2013, at 2:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center.

1. The minutes of the Graduate Deans' Group meeting from August 22, 2013 were approved.
2. Updates from the Graduate School  
Carolyn Hodges, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, reported the following:
  - Recurring Funds for Stipends: The Chancellor is considering providing additional recurring funds for stipends for new graduate students. Details about the amount, when the funding will be provided to college deans and how it will be administered and monitored are not yet available. For the third year in a row he will commit \$200,000 in on-recurring funding to support graduate student travel to present at national and international conferences.
  - Raises: Graduate students appointed as GTAs, GRAs, and GAs received raises along with raises provided to faculty and staff for fiscal year 2013-14.
  - Graduate School Self Study/Program Review: The Graduate School will undergo a self-study/program review to determine plans for staff hiring (replacement for Kay Reed, addition of a business manager, other positions) and consideration of other potential structural adjustments.
  - Top 25 Action Plan Report:
    - Recruitment/Diversity: (Status: Long-term , ongoing actions are in progress)
      - Oak Ridge, TN-Score support for the GEM Grad Lab (2<sup>nd</sup>) – completed
      - GEO mapping – tool for aggressive recruitment based on strategic planning – completed and ongoing
      - Visitation – pilot program with McNair programs – planning stage
      - Website overhaul – planning stage (Status: Action steps in progress; have meet with Office of Communications and with OIT to determine project assignment)

- Signed MOU with the Univ. of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras (lead college is the College of Communication and Information Science) completed
- China Scholarship Council and China Agricultural University, Nanjing University, Institute of Applied Ecology, Chinese Academy for a joint Chinese/UT master's and EcoPartnership Scholar Program" – in progress
- Maximize Degree Offerings – Certificates (policy and structure review by Graduate Council) – in progress
- Launch of two new master's degree programs, MFA and MPPA – completed and available for 2014 applicants
- Increase Graduate Student Financial Support: (Status: Actions initiated; dependent upon funding stream; deans will possibly receive some stipend funding for new applicants - 2014)
  - New funding for graduate student recruitment – recurring (?) funding for new stipends (pending official notification)
  - Review of assistantship structure – in progress
  - Benefits – Leave of absence, FMLA (proposed by GSS and to be reviewed by Graduate Council) – in progress
- Admissions – ADMIT Enhancements: (Status: Initial action plan completed; enhancements added August 2013)
  - Applicant Status Portal Form – completed and launched
  - Applicant Decision Portal Form – completed and launched
- Professional Development/Student Engagement and Success: (Status: Long-term, ongoing action steps are in progress)
  - New Student Orientation – GSS leadership; follow-up assessment – completed
  - International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Testing Program (formerly the SPEAK® Testing Program) – completed and ongoing
  - Continue to present and build workshop series, focus on mentoring – ongoing
  - Guide for directors of graduate studies – in progress
  - External Fellowship information (Office of Research and Engagement) – completed
- Student Data and Tracking: (Status: Action steps in progress; dependent on funding stream; tied to other Top 25 areas)
  - Enhancements to Banner processes, e.g., dissertation defense workflow, graduate degree audit – planning stage
  - Creation of efficiencies – Graduate School staff changes, reorganization of processes
    - Search for business manager in progress (featured in Top 25 action plan) – in progress

### 3. Directors of Graduate Studies

Joy DeSensi, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, reported the following:

- Questions have come to the attention of the Graduate School regarding information related to the Directors of Graduate Studies (DGS). In an effort to alleviate these issues, Joy DeSensi requested the assistance of the Graduate Deans to encourage departments to:
  - Be certain every department has a faculty member assigned to work in the capacity of the DGS; that the graduate students are aware of who is serving in this capacity; and to inform the Graduate School when there is a change of personnel in this area
  - Be certain each department has developed a *Graduate Student Handbook* noting procedures for carrying out graduate degree requirements; that the handbooks are posted on department website and that the information is consistent with that of the yearly updated hard copy of the handbook which is submitted to the Graduate School the first day of classes each fall term
  - Make revisions to the handbook during the spring term at the latest, in order for department faculty to have time to discuss and approve changes; a date should appear at the end of the section to indicate when the policy/procedure was changed/approved
- A *Director of Graduate Studies Manual* is being developed by the Graduate School which will provide more detailed information for the DGS on carrying out specific responsibilities.

### 4. Other

- A request was made to invite James Boyle III, Administrator of the Student Health Service, to speak at the January meeting regarding the new changes that will occur due to the new health insurance regulations. Questions may be sent to the Graduate School prior to the January meeting, so they may be compiled and sent to James Boyle prior to the meeting.
- Yvonne Kilpatrick, Director of Graduate Admissions, announced that the Office of Graduate Admissions and the Center for International Education are hosting an English language proficiency conditional admission workshop on Monday, October 14 at 3:00 p.m. in the International House Great Room. Each graduate program is requested to send a representative to the workshop as developing a collaborative strategy involving graduate programs, the Center for International Education, and the Office of Graduate Admissions is critical to the success of English language proficiency conditional admission.

The next Graduate Deans' Group meeting will be on Thursday, January 9, 2014, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center.

Meeting Dates:      February 13, 2014  
                              March 27, 2014

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Gay Henegar  
Secretary to Graduate Deans' Group